

**COLORADO RIVER RECOVERY PROGRAM  
FY-2004/05 PROPOSED SCOPE OF WORK for:  
Colorado's Instream Flow Protection**

**Project #: 70**

**Lead Agency:** Colorado Water Conservation Board  
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**Category:**

- ☒ Ongoing project
- ☐ Ongoing-revised project
- ☐ Requested new project
- ☐ Unsolicited proposal

**Expected Funding Source:**

- ☐ Annual funds
- ☐ Capital funds
- ☒ Other (in-kind services)

**I. Title of Proposal:** Colorado's Instream Flow Protection

**II. Relationship to RIPRAP:**

Yampa and Little Snake Rivers: I.B.3.d, I.C.3.d, I.D.2.d  
White River: I.B, I.C.4, I.D.1  
Colorado Mainstem: I.A.5 [a,b,c,d,h,m], I.B.2, I.B.3.d, I.B.4.[a,b]  
Gunnison River: I.B.4, I.C.1.a, I.C.2

**III. Study Background/Rationale and Hypotheses:**

To comply with the Recovery Implementation Program for Endangered Species in the Upper Colorado River Basin through protection of instream flows.

**IV. Study Goals, Objectives, End Product:**

The study objective, goal and end product of the CWCB efforts are to protect instream flows for the benefit of the endangered fish.

**V. Study area:** State of Colorado, Upper Colorado River Basin

**VI. Study Methods/Approach:**

Changes to the existing instream flow filings (Case Nos. 5-95CW296 & 595CW297 on the Colorado River, and Case Nos. 6-95CW155 & 6-95CW156 on the Yampa River) occurred at the January and May 1999 CWCB meetings. As a result of concerns

expressed by the Service and other Program participants, the CWCB withdrew the baseflow and recovery flow instream flow filings on the Colorado and Yampa rivers. The Colorado Division of Wildlife staff has been instructed to develop new flow recommendations. Until the new flow recommendations are submitted and approved, the CWCB will review instream flow protection activities and performance of the 15-Mile Reach PBO and determine the instream flow protection needs. In particular, the CWCB will implement the water depletion accounting described in Appendix B of the 15-Mile Reach PBO, primarily through the CRDSS workplan, and supplement those activities through this effort as appropriate.

## **VII. Task Description and Schedule:**

The CWCB staff will continue to work with the Attorney General's Office, Board Members, Colorado Division of Wildlife, USFWS and Recovery Program participants to stay current with Recovery Program needs. Future filings on the Colorado and Yampa rivers will not be pursued until CDOW has developed a new process for making ISF recommendations and provide recommendations based on that process. Furthermore, the need for future filings will be based on the success of the activities identified in the 15-Mile Reach PBO. The following task descriptions are provided for the river basins originally scheduled to have flow recommendations reviewed or filed for.

### **A. Colorado River**

The Board and Division staffs will work closely to develop recommendations for base flows on the Colorado River. End products such as scientific review and Notices of Intent to Appropriate for the Colorado River mainstem from Rifle to the Roller Dam and Roller Dam to the 15-Mile Reach are on hold until new flow recommendations are developed by the CDOW and approved by the Recovery Program and CWCB.

The CWCB will continue to participate in providing and protecting water to the 15-Mile Reach through contract deliveries from several upstream reservoirs.

### **B. Yampa River below Little Snake River**

The study objectives, goals and end products of Board and Division staff efforts on the Yampa River are to develop flow recommendations and possibly obtain water right decrees for instream flows. Board staff will continue to work with the Attorney General's Office, Board Members, Colorado Division of Wildlife, USF&WS, and Recovery Program participants. Specific actions are on hold until the CDOW staff develops new flow recommendations and such are approved by the Recovery Program and CWCB. The CWCB's involvement with the Yampa Management Plan will continue.

#### C. Little Snake River

The study objectives, goals and end products of Board and Division staff efforts on the Little Snake River are to develop flow recommendations and possibly obtain water right decrees for instream flows. Board staff will continue to work with the Attorney General's Office, Board Members, Colorado Division of Wildlife, USF&WS, and Recovery Program participants. Specific actions are on hold until the CDOW staff develops new flow recommendations and such flow recommendations are approved by the Recovery Program and CWCB. Recommendations for the Little Snake River will be incorporated into the Yampa Management Plan.

#### D. Gunnison River

Board staff continue to participate with the Service and Colorado Division of Wildlife in discussions and scientific review of the instream flow recommendations provided by the Service on the Gunnison River as part of the Aspinall Section 7 Consultation process. Board staff will also participate in the quantification of reserved water rights for the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park.

#### E. White River

The study objectives, goals and end products of Board and Division staff on the White River are to develop flow recommendations and possibly obtain water right decrees for instream flows. Board staff will continue to work with the Attorney General's Office, Board Members, Colorado Division of Wildlife, USF&WS, and Recovery Program participants. Specific actions are on hold until new flow recommendations are developed and such flow recommendations are approved by the Recovery Program and CWCB.

#### F.

The CWCB will monitor issues related to the 15-Mile Reach PBO and address those issues for which it has specific responsibility, including specific activities associated with the water depletion accounting described in Appendix B, as appropriate under this workplan.

#### **VIII. FY-2004 Work:**

CDOW continues extensive field work and modeling efforts on the Colorado and Yampa rivers as part of their task to develop new methods for instream flow recommendations for the endangered fish.

The extremely low streamflows during 2002 prevented CDOW from performing much of the planned fieldwork, including fish sampling and population estimates. CDOW met with the CWCB to discuss their future work. CDOW proposes extensive investigation in 2003 into the effects of the extremely low 2002 streamflows on the fish populations at their study sites on the Yampa and Colorado Rivers. CDOW will gather as much data as possible about the effects of droughts on the native fish populations. This investigation may continue into FY2004. CDOW also plans to establish study sites on the Gunnison River in FY2004 to conduct fish sampling, population estimation and habitat investigation and modeling. CWCB staff will continue to work with the CDOW on the development of new instream flow recommendation methods.

The CWCB will also focus on issues related to the water depletion accounting for the 15-Mile Reach that will commence in FY 2005.

##### **CWCB<sup>1</sup>**

Colorado River	\$ 2,000
Yampa	\$ 4,000
Little Snake River	\$ 1,000
Gunnison	\$ 5,000
White	\$ 3,000
<u>15-Mile Reach PBO</u>	<u>\$ 5,000</u>
	\$20,000

TOTAL: \$20,000 (in-kind services for FY 2004)

#### **FY-2005 Work:**

The CWCB will continue their work on the Colorado, Yampa, Gunnison and White Rivers and on the 15-Mile Reach PBO as discussed in section VII above. One focus will be the water depletion accounting for the 15-Mile Reach as described in Appendix B of the PBO.

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<sup>1</sup> Includes Attorney General's funding in CWCB Budget

**CWCB<sup>2</sup>**

Colorado River	\$ 1,000
Yampa	\$ 1,000
Little Snake River	\$ 1,000
Gunnison	\$ 4,000
White	\$ 2,000
15-Mile Reach PBO	\$ 6,000
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	\$15,000

TOTAL: \$15,000 (in-kind services for FY 2005)

The extensive work being performed by the CDOW is not included in this estimate of CWCB in-kind services.

**IX. Budget Summary:**

Because the CWCB and CDOW will be working on the flow recommendation issue, the cost estimates provided in this Scope of Work may need revision as plans begin to develop.

FY-2004	\$20,000
FY-2005	\$15,000

**X. Reviewers:**

Not Applicable

**XI. References:**

Not Applicable

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<sup>2</sup> Includes Attorney General's funding in CWCB Budget